

Isab. Most strange: but yet most truly will I speake,
That *Angelo's* forborne, is it not strange?
That *Angelo's* a murderer, is't not strange?
That *Angelo* is an adulterous thief,
An hypocrite, a virgin violator,
Is it not strange? and strange?

Duke. Nay it is ten times strange?

Isa. It is not truer he is *Angelo*,
Then this is all as true, as it is strange;
Nay, it is ten times true, for truth is truth.
To th'end of reckning.

Duke. Away with her: poore soule
She speaks this, in th'infirmitie of sence.

Isa. Oh Prince, I coniure thee, as thou beleu'st
There is another comfort, then this world,
That thou neglect me not, with that opinion
That I am touch'd with madnesse: make not impossible
That which but seemes vnlike, 'tis not impossible
But one, the wickedst caitiffe on the ground
May seeme as shie, as graue, as iust, as absolute:
As *Angelo*, euen so may *Angelo*
In all his dressings, caracts, titles, formes,
Be an arch-villaine: Beleue it, royall Prince
If he be lesse, he's nothing, but he's more,
Had I more name for badnesse.

Duke. By mine honesty
If she be mad, as I beleue no other,
Her madnesse hath the oddest frame of sence,
Such a dependancy of thing, on thing,
As ere I heard in madnesse.

Isab. Oh gracious *Duke*
Harpe not on that; nor do not banish reason
For inequality, but let your reason serue
To make the truth appeare, where it seemes hid,
And hide the false seemes true.

Duke. Many that are not mad
Haue sure more lacke of reason:
What would you say?

Isab. I am the Sister of one *Claudio*,
Condemnd vpon the Act of Fornication
To loose his head, condemn'd by *Angelo*,
I, (in probation of a Sisterhood)
Was sent to by my Brother; one *Lucio*
As then the Messenger.

Luc. That's I, and I like your Grace:
I came to her from *Claudio*, and desir'd her,
To try her gracious fortune with Lord *Angelo*,
For her poore Brothers pardon.

Isab. That's he indeede.

Duke. You were not bid to speake.

Luc. No, my good Lord,
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.

Duke. I wish you now then,
Pray you take note of it: and when you haue
A businesse for your selfe: pray heauen you then
Be perfect.

Luc. I warrant your honor.

Duke. The warrant's for your selfe: take heede to't.

Isab. This Gentleman told somewhat of my Tale.

Luc. Right.

Duke. It may be right, but you are in the wrong
To speake before your time: proceed.

Isab. I went

To this pernicious Caitiffe Deputie.

Duke. That's somewhat madly spoken.

Isab. Pardon it,

The phrase is to the matter.

Duke. Mended againe: the matter: proceed.

Isab. In brieft, to set the needlesse processe by:
How I perswaded, how I praid, and kneel'd,
How he refeld me, and how I replide
(For this was of much length) the wild conclusion
I now begin with griefe, and shame to vtter.
He would not, but by gift of my chaste body
To his concupiscible intemperate lust
Release my brother; and after much debatement,
My sisterly remorse, confutes mine honour,
And I did yeeld to him: But the next morne betimes,
His purpose sursetting, he sends a warrant
For my poore brothers head.

Duke. This is most likely.

Isab. Oh that it were as like as it is true.

Duke. By heauen (fond wretch) you knowst not what thou
Or else thou art suborn'd against his honor
In hatefull practise: first his Integrity
Stands without blemish: next it imports no reason,
That with such vehemency he should pursue
Faults proper to himselfe: if he had so offended
He would haue waigh'd thy brother by himselfe,
And not haue cut him off: some one hath set you on:
Confesse the truth, and say by whose aduice
Thou cam'st heere to complaine.

Isab. And is this all?

Then oh you blessed Ministers aboue
Keepe me in patience, and with ripead time
Vnsold the euill, which is heere wrapt vp
In countenance: heauen shield your Grace from woe,
As I thus wrong'd, hence vnbeleueed goe.

Duke. I know you'd faine be gone: An Officer:
To prison with her: Shall we thus permit
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall,
On him to neere vs? This needs must be a practise;
Who knew of your intent and coming hither?

Isa. One that I would were heere, *Frier Lodowick*.

Duke. A ghostly Father, belike:

Who knowes that *Lodowicke*?

Luc. My Lord, I know him, 'tis a meddling Fryer,
I doe not like the man: had he been Lay my Lord,
For certaine words he spake against your Grace
In your retirement, I had swing'd him soundly.

Duke. Words against mee? this 'a good Fryer belike
And to set on this wretched woman here
Against our Substitute: Let this Fryer be found.

Luc. But yesternight my Lord, she and that Fryer
I saw them at the prison: a sawcy Fryer,
A very scurvy fellow.

Peter. Blessed be your Royall Grace:

I haue stood by my Lord, and I haue heard
Your royall ear abus'd: first hath this woman
Most wrongfully accus'd your Substitute,
Who is as free from touch, or soyle with her
As she from one vngot.

Duke. We did beleue no lesse,

Know you that *Frier Lodowick* that she speaks of?

Peter. I know him for a man diuine and holy,

Not scurvy, nor a temporary medler

As he's reported by this Gentleman:

And on my trust, a man that neuer yet

Did (as he vouches) mis-report your Grace.

Luc. My Lord, most villanously, beleue it.

Peter. Well: he in time may come to cleere himselfe;
But at this instant he is sicke, my Lord:

Of

Of a strange Feaour: vpon his meere request
Being come to knowledge, that there was complaint
Intended gainst Lord *Angelo*, came I hether
To speake as from his mouth, what he doth know
Is true, and false: And what he with his oath
And all probation will make vp full cleare
Whensoever he's conuenced: First for this woman,
To iustifie this worthy Noble man:
So vulgarly and personally accus'd,
Her shall you heare disproued to her eyes,
Till she her selfe confesse it.

Duke. Good Frier, let's heare it:

Doe you not smile at this, Lord *Angelo*?

Oh heauen, the vanity of wretched sooles,

Give vs some seates, Come cozen *Angelo*,

In this I'll be impartiall: be you Iudge

Of your owne Cause: Is this the Wiues Frier?

Enter Mariana.

First, let her shew your face, and after, speake.

Mar. Pardon my Lord, I will not shew my face

Vntill my husband bid me.

Duke. What, are you married?

Mar. No my Lord.

Duke. Are you a Maid?

Mar. No my Lord.

Duke. A Widow then?

Mar. Neither, my Lord.

Duke. Why you are nothing then: neither Maid, Wi-
dow, nor Wife?

Luc. My Lord, she may be a Puncke: for many of
them, are neither Maid, Widow, nor Wife.

Duke. Silence that fellow: I would he had some cause
to prattle for himselfe.

Luc. Well my Lord.

Mar. My Lord, I doe confesse I nere was married,

And I confesse besides, I am no Maid.

I haue known my husband, yet my husband

Knowes not, that euer he knew me.

Luc. He was drunk then, my Lord, it can be no better.

Duke. For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so to.

Luc. Well, my Lord.

Duke. This is no witness for Lord *Angelo*.

Mar. Now I come to't, my Lord.

Shee that accuses him of Fornication,

In selfe-same manner, doth accuse my husband,

And charges him, my Lord, with such a time,

When I'le depose I had him in mine Armes

With all th'effect of Loue.

Ang. Charges shee mee then me?

Mar. Not that I know.

Duke. No? you say your husband.

Mar. Why iust, my Lord, and that is *Angelo*,

Who thinks he knowes, that he nere knew my body,

But knowes, he thinks, that he knowes *Isabels*.

Ang. This is a strange abuse: Let's see thy face.

Mar. My husband bids me now I will vnmaske.

This is that face, thou cruell *Angelo*

Which once thou sworst, was worth the looking on:

This is the hand, which with a vowd contract

Was fast belockt in thine: This is the body

That tooke away the match from *Isabell*,

And did supply thee at thy garden-house

In her Imagin'd person.

Duke. Know you this woman?

Luc. Carnallie shee saies.

Duke. Sirha, no more.

Luc. Enough my Lord.

Ang. My Lord, I must confesse, I know this woman,
And five yeres since there was some speech of marriage
Betwixt my selfe, and her: which was broke off,
Partly for that her promis'd proportions
Came short of Composition: But in chiefe
For that her reputation was dis-valued
In leuitie: Since which time of five yeres
I neuer spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her
Vpon my faith, and honor.

Mar. Noble Prince,

As there comes light from heauen, and words frō breath,
As there is sence in truth, and truth in vertue,
I am affianced this mans wife, as strongly
As words could make vp vowes: And my good Lord,
But Tuesday night last gon, in's garden house,
He knew me as a wife. As this is true,
Let me in safety raise me from my knees,
Or else for euer be confixed here
A Marble Monument.

Ang. I did but smile till now,
Now, good my Lord, giue me the scope of Iustice,
My patience here is touch'd: I doe perceiue
These poore informall women, are no more
But instruments of some more mightier member
That sets them on. Let me haue way, my Lord
To finde this practise out.

Duke. I, with my heart,
And punish them to your height of pleasure.
Thou foolish Frier, and thou pernicious woman
Compact with her that's gone: thinkst thou, thy oathes,
Though they would swear downe each particular Saint,
Were testimonies against his worth, and credit
That's seald in approbation? you, Lord *Escalus*
Sit with my Cozen, lend him your kinde paines
To finde out this abuse, whence 'tis deriu'd.
There is another Frier that set them on,
Let him be sent for.

Peter. Would he were here, my Lord, for he indeede
Hath set the women on to this Complaint;
Your Prouost knowes the place where he abides,
And he may fetch him.

Duke. Goe, doe it instantly:
And you, my noble and well-warranted Cozen
Whom it concernes to heare this matter forth,
Doe with your iniuries as seemes you best
In any chastisement; I for a while
Will leaue you; but stir not you till you haue
Well determin'd vpon these Slanderers.

Exit.
Ese. My Lord, wee'll doe it throughly: Signior *Lu-*
cio, did not you say you knew that *Frier Lodowick* to be a
dishonest person?

Luc. *Cucullus non facit Monachum*, honest in nothing
but in his Clothes, and one that hath spoke most villan-
ous speeches of the Duke.

Ese. We shall intreat you to abide heere till he come,
and inforce them against him: we shall finde this Frier a
notable fellow.

Luc. As any in Vienna, on my word.

Ese. Call that same *Isabell* here once againe, I would
speake with her: pray you, my Lord, giue mee leaue to
question, you shall see how I'll handle her.

Luc. Not better then he, by her owne report.

Ese. Say you?

Luc. Marry sir, I thinke, if you handled her priuately
thee